

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Education

Peter Riley Bahr, assistant professor of education, School of Education, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, School of Education.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. 2004 University of California, Sociology, Davis
M.A. 2000 University of California, Sociology, Davis
B.S. 1997 California State University, Criminology, Sacramento
A.S. 1995 Solano Community College, Chemistry, Fairfield, CA
A.A. 1995 Solano Community College, Liberal Arts, Fairfield, CA

Professional Record:

2009 – present Assistant Professor, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, School of Education, University of Michigan
2004 – 2009 Assistant Professor, Sociology, Wayne State University
2001 – 2003 Instructor, Sociology, University of California, Davis
2001 – 2003 Educational Researcher, Chancellor’s Office of the California Community Colleges, State of California
2000 – 2001 Research Program Specialist, Department of Education, State of California

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Bahr’s principal teaching at the University of Michigan to date has been in quantitative methods. His course syllabi are detailed, current, and well organized. Assignments, which include essays, reading reflections, research papers, small group literature reviews, and presentations, are appropriate and geared toward targeted learning objectives.

Professor Bahr’s course evaluations are consistently strong. This is particularly notable because quantitative methods courses in the School of Education are typically rated lower than other courses. Median responses to the statement, “Overall, this instructor is an excellent teacher” (on a five point Likert scale) are above 4.25; and the median responses to the statement, “Overall, this is an excellent course” are at or above 4.0 in all but one case. In addition, his students’ written responses, across courses, are very positive, with students citing his excellent instruction and his openness to feedback.

In addition to these classroom contributions, Professor Bahr is a committed mentor. He serves as advisor to several doctoral and master’s students in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education. He also serves on several dissertation committees and is chair for one student.

The teaching record of Professor Bahr shows that he is a conscientious and knowledgeable teacher who consistently performs well in the classroom. Culminating written assignments in all courses invite extended discourse relevant to the course goals.

Research: Almost all of Professor Bahr's research focuses on community colleges. The analysis is mainly empirical and relies almost exclusively on administrative data from the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. One vein of Professor Bahr's research is developing performance metrics for community colleges. Another is analyzing the temporal aspects and outcomes of student remediation in community colleges. Professor Bahr has studied whether students who delay enrolling in remedial courses are less likely to remediate successfully and whether students whose remediation requires a number of courses are less likely to remediate. He is also interested in the transfer behavior of community college students and its impact on college outcomes such as degree or certificate completion. More recently, Professor Bahr has been using cluster analytic methods to categorize community college students based on their patterns of use.

Professor Bahr has a substantial number of publications, with 18 articles that have been published (or are in press) in refereed journals, 11 in the three leading higher education journals (*Journal of Higher Education*, *Research in Higher Education*, and *Review of Higher Education*). Of those articles in refereed journals, 10 have been published since Professor Bahr joined the University of Michigan faculty in 2009. Professor Bahr has also written several book chapters and two papers that are currently under review.

Professor Bahr has garnered financial support for his research. His funding includes a \$1.5 million dollar grant from the Institute of Educational Sciences for which he is a co-principal investigator. In addition, he has three smaller grants and has transitioned towards larger awards in recent years. His list of funded research is noteworthy for a junior faculty member.

Professor Bahr is a solid empirical researcher who has been analyzing important educational issues with increasingly sophisticated quantitative methods. His current and anticipated work suggests that he intends to expand his research agenda.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Bahr, P. R. (in press). Classifying community colleges based on students' patterns of use. *Research in Higher Education*.

Bahr, P. R. (2012). Deconstructing remediation in the community college: Exploring associations between course-taking patterns, course outcomes, and attrition from the remedial math and remedial writing sequences. *Research in Higher Education*, 53, 661-693.

Bahr, P. R. (2012). Student flow between community colleges: Investigating lateral transfer. *Research in Higher Education*, 53, 94-121.

Bahr, P. R. (2010). The bird's eye view of community colleges: A behavioral typology of first-time students based on cluster analytic classification. *Research in Higher Education*, 51, 724-749.

Bahr, P. R. (2010). Preparing the underprepared: An analysis of racial disparities in postsecondary mathematics remediation. *Journal of Higher Education*, 81, 209-237.

Bahr, P. R. (2010). Revisiting the efficacy of postsecondary remediation: The moderating effects of depth/breadth of deficiency. *Review of Higher Education*, 33, 177-205.

Bahr, P. R. (2009). Educational attainment as process: Using hierarchical discrete-time event history analysis to model rate of progress. *Research in Higher Education*, 50, 691-714.

Service: Professor Bahr is a consulting editor for both *The Journal of Higher Education* and *Research in Higher Education*, two of the top journals in the field. Having two major board memberships before tenure is unusual, and gives some indication of the editors' high regard for Professor Bahr. He also attends and routinely presents papers at national conferences.

At the school level, Professor Bahr has served on the Graduate Affairs Committee, the Capital Projects Committee, and the Quantitative Methods Curriculum Task Force. He also serves as the faculty advisor of the Community College Interdisciplinary Research Forum.

Professor Bahr's service within the university is at a level that meets our expectations for an assistant professor. His service to the profession through his editorial work, however, is higher than what is typically seen at the assistant professor level.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Professor Bahr has been productive, having published many articles in the main higher education journals. Professors at [my institution] have received tenure with this number of publications, and perhaps fewer. In addition, these are carefully done, thorough, and very detailed empirical papers that pay a great deal of attention to variable definitions and sample construction, and in some cases they test several hypotheses."

Reviewer B: "As I reflect on Dr. Bahr's trajectory, I foresee a career that has the potential to have high impact on education policy that involves community colleges as the gateway or gatekeeper to postsecondary education for millions of Americans. ... Through these multiple outlets, Dr. Bahr is executing a smart strategy to disseminate his work to multiple communities, and this multifaceted publication strategy will serve him well as he advances to senior scholar status and assumes an even greater role in translating his research into federal policy, as he is beginning to do. ... Dr. Bahr is bringing new theoretical and methodological perspectives to the study of these serious problems, and his fresh approach is greatly valued by the community of scholars who study higher education."

Reviewer C: "Dr. Bahr's list of funded research is noteworthy for someone still with a rank of assistant professor. He has a large number of smaller grants and has transitioned towards larger awards in recent years. ... If I were on a committee at my institution, I would say that Dr. Bahr would meet the research and external service requirements for promotion. For this stage of his career, he has a large number of solid/good publications and a very strong record of securing external funding."

Reviewer D: "Throughout his work, Bahr repeatedly shows good grasp of the quantitative methods he is using and his descriptions capture the essential features of his results. He is extremely careful to indicate what he has done, what it says, and what its limitations are. He is working with extremely strong data, which is likely difficult to work with and he manages to convey results well, and clearly, so readers can follow. ... At my institution I believe this body of work would merit promotion to tenured associate professor. I think he has a very promising career ahead of him."

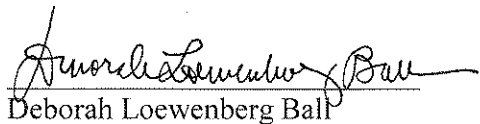
Reviewer E: "When you see a publication by Peter Bahr you know what you can anticipate; a first-rate study on a particular aspect of the consequences of community college students' alternative course-taking and enrollment behaviors within and between community colleges. I consider him to be one of the leading higher education scholars because he tackles important and complicated questions in a thorough and thoughtful manner. ... I am pleased to support, without any reservation, his promotion to the rank of associate professor in the School of Education at the University of Michigan, and am confident that he will continue to evolve as a leading higher education scholar at the national level."

Reviewer F: "In short, he has a solid track record of outstanding scholarship and has served as an outstanding citizen in his field. Few of his peers in the field of higher education have been as

productive to this point in their career. ... A stream of high quality publications defines the arc of Dr. Bahr's early career. His conceptualization is sound and has evolved in meaningful ways over the years. His analyses are sophisticated yet parsimonious. ... Dr. Bahr has established himself as a national leader in the field of higher education and, for the reasons expressed above, I have little doubt that he will continue to thrive both academically and professionally as he enters the next phase of his career."

Reviewer G: "Dr. Bahr's work appears to be well grounded in the appropriate theoretical frameworks for the topics he examines. The strength of Dr. Bahr's work lies in the extent to which he is able to delve into the details of these experiences for students using a range of quantitative methods... Overall I feel that the quantity and quality of Dr. Bahr's accomplishments to date in research are sufficient to merit promotion to associate professor with tenure at the University of Michigan."

Summary of Recommendation: Professor Bahr is a promising scholar who has been increasingly productive since arriving at the University of Michigan, with a solid record of both obtaining research grants and publishing his work in the top journals in higher education. Professor Bahr's teaching record, as shown by his course evaluations and comments by his students and advisees, shows him to be a knowledgeable and dedicated teacher whose teaching is valued by his students. His service contributions to the school meet our expectations for an assistant professor while his national service, as demonstrated by his editorial work, is noteworthy. It is with the support of the School of Education Executive Committee that I recommend Professor Peter Riley Bahr for promotion to associate professor of education, with tenure, School of Education.



Deborah Loewenberg Ball
William H. Payne Collegiate Professor of Education
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, and Dean
School of Education

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